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ENG 1091G-097: Research, Persuasion, and Expression: Online and Offline

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English 1091, Language and Composition / Fall 2010

Research, Persuasion, and Expression: Online and Offline

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Introduction

Why does writing well matter?

- Strong writing skills help people earn promotions—in almost every field of work.
- Good writers are more successful in college.
- Writing well can help you participate effectively in political/public debates.
- Written communication can also be a source of pleasure, both for writers and readers.

Because so much written communication has moved to on-line forums, in this course we will analyze writing and practice writing in both online and offline settings. We will focus on three important sets of skills: research, persuasion, and expression.

An Invitation

As honors students, you are likely to come to college with reasonably good writing skills and to be able to produce papers that will easily meet the requirements for passing a writing course like this one. However, almost all writers at all levels can improve their writing skills through focused study. My ideal in this class is to help each of you identify the areas of writing in which you personally have the most capacity for improvement and to coach you through the kinds of practice that will help you improve. You are required by the university to pass the course, but I invite you to choose this more challenging path.

Required Texts

Graff et al., *They Say / I Say with Readings*
Lopate, *The Art of the Personal Essay*

Other Required Materials

- A flash drive for saving work you do when our class meets in a lab space
- Sufficient paper and toner for printing papers throughout the semester, or sufficient funds to pay for printing on campus
- A stapler or paper clips for binding your printed papers

Attendance

I expect you will come to every scheduled class session. However, illness sometimes interferes. When you are seriously ill or have symptoms of a contagious illness like H1N1, you should not come to class. The university, quite reasonably, requires that faculty allow students to make up work they miss when they have legitimate reasons, like illness, to miss class.

When you are absent, it is *your* responsibility to find out what you missed and make arrangements to make up that work.

In this class, all work that was due on the day you missed class is due on the day you return to class, and any assignments that were made while you were absent are due at the latest one class session after you return to class.

What about serious illness? If you have an illness that requires you to miss multiple class sessions, you *must* get in touch with me by phone as soon as you know you will miss more than one class session to make a plan for keeping up with the course. If you are so ill that you can not speak on the phone, have someone else call me for you.

Is there a maximum number of days I can miss and still pass the class? For this class, there is no policy that says that after a certain number of absences, you automatically fail. If you miss a lot of class, however, you are at risk of failing the course due to not learning enough to pass it.

Late Work

Because I do not wish to encourage anyone to skip class when it isn't necessary, during the first 14 weeks of the semester I offer a one-day grace period (one class session) to anyone who finds they need an extra day to complete an assignment. After one class session, unless you have made other arrangements with me, the assignment will no longer be accepted and will be recorded as a 0.

Information for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

The English Department's Statement on Plagiarism

"Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work' (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

Grade Breakdown

<i>Project</i>	<i>Distribution</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>	
Homework	10%	93-100	A
Essay 1	10%	85-92	B
Essay 2	15%	77-84	C
Essay 3	15%	69-76	D
Essay 4	20%	68 and below	F
Essay 5	10%		
Wikipedia Project	10%		
Participation	10%		

Homework. Written homework, usually brief, will be assigned on most days. Some of the homework assignments will relate to the longer essays, so you should save the homework assignments when they are returned to you. Unless specified otherwise, homework should be word-processed and printed and handed in during class.

Essays. Essays 1 and 2 will both be persuasive essays for which you will read a collection of essays on a topic and then make your own contribution to the conversation on that topic. For essay 1, you will use sources that we've read together and will not be required to use additional sources, but for essay 2 you will identify points of information that could help you contribute to the discussion, then find credible sources of information that address those questions and incorporate them into your essay. For essay 3, you will find an ongoing debate online on a topic that matters to you, make a contribution to that debate, and write an essay analyzing the debate and your contribution to it. Essay 4 will be a personal essay, and in Essay 5 you will analyze and respond to some personal writing that you find online and that you find compelling.

(All essays must be typed, double spaced, with 1 inch margins, using 12-point font, with a heading but no cover page, with pages numbered, stapled or paper clipped, and not in a report cover or binder.)

Wikipedia Project. In conjunction with Essay 2, you will work with a group of classmates to identify a Wikipedia page related to the subject of your readings for Essay 2 that is in need of more accurate or more complete information. As a group, you will edit the Wikipedia page and you will write a brief report on the project.

Participation. Plenty of research shows that you learn more (and more deeply) when you discuss material than when you merely listen to others. So participation is a part of your grade for this course. However, please keep in mind that quality is more important than quantity. Talking a lot will not earn you a positive participation grade if the content of your talk is not insightful or relevant. In addition, please note that participation in peer review workshops and attendance at individual conferences with the instructor play an important part in your overall participation grade.

Schedule

Readings, homework, and essays are due on the date listed. Although I reserve the right to announce changes to this schedule, in general I will follow it and you should be able to rely on this schedule to know what is due at each class session.

TSIS = *They Say, I Say*

APE = *The Art of the Personal Essay*

A "C" after the date indicates that class meets in room 3130 Coleman Hall ("classroom"), while an "L" indicates that we will meet in 3120 Coleman Hall ("lab").

Unit	Date/Location	Reading/Activities/Deadlines
1. Writing as Conversation	M Aug 23 C	Introduction to course; in-class writing
	W Aug 25 C	<i>TSIS</i> Introduction and Chapter 1 (pp. 1-27). Complete exercise #2 on p. 14 and exercise #2 on p. 27.
	F Aug 27 C	<i>TSIS</i> Chapter 2 (pp. 28-38) and Zinzchenko, "Don't Blame the Eater" (pp. 153-155). Complete exercise #2 on page 38.
	M Aug 30 L	<i>TSIS</i> Chapter 3 (pp. 39-47) and Balko, "What You Eat Is Your Business" (pp. 157-160). Complete exercise #1 on p. 160, using quotations from Balko's essay in your response.
	W Sept 1 L	<i>TSIS</i> Chapter 4 (pp. 51-63) and Banzhaf, "Lawsuits" (pp. 162-170). Complete exercise #2 on p. 63, using Banzhaf's essay to respond to.
	F Sept 3 L	<i>TSIS</i> Chapter 5 (pp. 64-73) and Engler, "Obesity" (pp. 172-181). Complete exercise #1 on pp. 71-72 and exercise #2 on p. 181.
	M Sept 6 C	<i>Labor Day – no class</i>
	W Sept 8 C	<i>TSIS</i> Chapter 6 (pp. 74-87) and Schlosser, "Your Trusted Friends" (pp. 182-198). Complete exercise #1 on pp. 86-87 and exercises #1 and #2 on p. 199.
	F Sept 10 C	<i>TSIS</i> Chapter 7 (pp. 88-97) and Orbach, "Fat as a Feminist Issue" (pp. 200-204). Complete exercise #1 on p. 97, using Orbach's essay and at least two of the other essays we have read so far in your answer (that is, Orbach + 2 of the essays on pp. 153-198).
	M Sept 13 L	<i>TSIS</i> Chapter 8 (pp. 101-114) and Campos, "Being Fat Is OK" (pp. 206-209). Complete exercise #1 on pp. 113-114 and #4 on p. 181 and write a proposal for Essay One.
	W Sept 15 L	<i>TSIS</i> Chapter 9 and Chapter 10 (pp. 115-132). Work on draft of Essay One.
	F Sept 17 L	Draft of Essay One due – in class peer review workshop.
	M Sept 20 C	Conferences on Essay One; Choice of Topic for Unit 2 due

Schedule (continued)

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Unit	Date/Location	Reading/Activities/Deadlines
2. Research to Contribute to a Conversation	W Sept 22 C	Final Version of Essay One due; organizational meeting for groups for Unit 2.
	F Sept 24 C	Group discussions of Unit 2 readings. Come to class with a list of research questions raised by the readings and points you wish to discuss.
	M Sept 27 L	Group discussions of Unit 2 readings. Come to class with a list of research questions raised by the readings and points you wish to discuss.
	W Sept 29 L	Reading #1 from course packet. Finding and evaluating research sources; Essay Two and Wikipedia project introduced.
	F Oct 1 L	Reading #2 from course packet. MLA and APA Documentation; Research/Wikipedia exploration.
	M Oct 4 C	In-class group meetings on Wikipedia project; individual conferences on Essay Two.
	W Oct 6 C	In-class group meetings on Wikipedia project; individual conferences on Essay Two.
	F Oct 8	<i>Fall Break – no class</i>
	M Oct 11 L	In-class work time for Wikipedia project and Essay Two
	W Oct 13 L	In-class work time for Wikipedia project and Essay Two
	F Oct 15 L	In-class work time for Wikipedia project and Essay Two
	M Oct 18 C	Conferences on Essay Two
	W Oct 20 C	Draft of Essay Two due; in class peer review.
3. Persuasion and Online Conversations	F Oct 22 C	Final draft of Essay Two due. Unit 3 introduced.
	M Oct 25 L	Reading #3 from course packet.
	W Oct 27 L	Work time for Essay Three. Before class, find an ongoing online discussion and make a contribution to that discussion.
	F Oct 29 L	Work time for Essay Three.
	M Nov 1 C	Draft of Essay Three due; in class peer review
	W Nov 3 C	Final version of Essay Three due. Unit 4 introduced.

Schedule (continued)

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4. The Personal Essay	F Nov 5 C	APE, introduction, pp. xxiii-li.
	M Nov 8 L	APE, Orwell, "Such, Such Were the Joys," pp. 269-302. HW: In course packet.
	W Nov 10 L	APE, Chesterton, "On Running After One's Hat," pp. 252-254 and Lu Hsun, "This Too Is Life," pp. 326-329. HW: In course packet.
	F Nov 12 L	APE, Ginzburg, "He and I," pp. 422-430 and Soyinka, "Why Do I Fast?" pp. 453-457. HW: In course packet.
	M Nov 15 C	APE, Thoreau, "Walking," pp. 480-504. HW: In course packet.
	W Nov 17 C	APE, Fuentes, "How I Started to Write," pp. 431-452. HW: In course packet.
	F Nov 19 C	APE, Didion, "Goodbye to All That," pp. 680-688. HW: In course packet.
	Nov 22-26	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>
	M Nov 29 L	Draft of Essay Four due. In class peer review.
	W Dec 1 L	Final version of Essay Four due. Unit 5 introduced.
5. Personal Writing Online	F Dec 3 L	Work time for locating an online text for Essay Five
	M Dec 6 C	Presentations of subjects for Essay Five
	W Dec 8 C	Presentations of subjects for Essay Five
	F Dec 10 C	Presentations of subjects for Essay Five. Course conclusion.
	T Dec 14 (finals week)	Essay Five due by 4:30 p.m. (Note: There is no final exam in English 1091.)